

BERNARD P. CARVALHO, JR.
Mayor



GARY K. HEU
Managing Director

COUNTY OF KAUAI

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

News Release

For Immediate Release: February 3, 2012

LARRY DILL, COUNTY ENGINEER
Tel (808) 241-4996
Fax (808) 241-6604

***Road to Recycling* tour bus series kicks off**

Participants on the first *Road to Recycling* tour bus were given a broad overview of the county's Division of Solid Waste Management and a first-hand look at two recycling facilities – the Kaua'i Resource Center and Garden Isle Disposal - along with the Kekaha Landfill.

"We wanted to educate residents about waste management in a stimulating way," said county recycling specialist Jeannie Yoshida, who designed the Kaua'i tour after Honolulu's *Tour de Trash*.

Based on evaluations completed by those who took part in the tour, this goal was achieved and inspired them to do more with regards to the 3 R's – reduce, reuse and recycle.

One participant who took the day off from work to go on the tour sent a follow-up email to Yoshida noting that his co-workers asked for a re-cap of the event and inundated him with questions.

"The message of the tour went beyond those of us who attended," said the participant.

At the start of the tour, Allison Fraley, Solid Waste program development coordinator, presented a synopsis of how the Solid Waste Division manages and diverts waste on Kaua'i.

Her presentation included: division goals; facilities managed by the division; update on the automated trash collection program, current waste stream/recycling, and landfill siting process; characterization of Kaua'i's waste; residential diversion programs – HI-5, Kaua'i

Recycles, green waste, home composting, used motor oil, household batteries, used cooking oil, special wastes, and abandoned/derelict vehicle program; household hazardous waste; electronics recycling; plastic bag reduction law; county's reuse and recycling partners; Zero Waste resolution; future diversion programs; ways that the county works with businesses to reduce waste; and a re-cap of the curbside recycling pilot.

The next stop on the tour was Garden Island Disposal, Inc. located in Nāwiliwili, where all of the island's recyclables from the HI-5 and Kaua'i Recycles programs are collected and processed, including: aluminum cans; newspaper; cardboard; glass; mixed paper; and plastics No. 1 and 2.

On the way to the Kekaha Landfill, Pat Gegen, chair of Zero Waste Kaua'i, provided information regarding Zero Waste principles. He noted that the Zero Waste resolution passed by the County Council last October has set a 70 percent diversion rate by 2023 for Kaua'i.

"We're already about halfway there at 30 percent," said Gegen.

As a comparison, the diversion rate for New York City is currently 15 percent and their goal is 30 percent.

The city with the highest diversion rate in the country is currently San Francisco at 77 percent.

Gegen told the tour group, "Ideally, it would be good to keep as much organic material out of the landfill as possible because it turns to methane gas over time, which is more harmful to the environment than carbon dioxide."

Gegen, who is also president of Kalāheo Elementary School's Parent Teacher School Association (PTSA), said that the organization is supported entirely by funds redeemed from recycling HI-5 plastic and aluminum containers, which amount to about \$6,000 per year.

"We also try to take advantage of the \$55,000 a year in recycling incentives offered by the Aluminum Can Institute and programs run by Reynolds Recycling. Last year, we received \$1,000 a year from each of these organizations," said Gegen.

He explained that the Kalāheo School PTSA uses these funds for various school recycling programs such as their kindergarten recycling classes, and it also pays the salary of the school's recycling coordinator.

In addition, other school programs are helped by the recycling fund including: robotics; Sunshine Express; and theatre arts. The fund is also used to support teacher development and augment needs not covered by the Department of Education or other fundraising sources.

Fraleley pointed out that residents of Kaua'i are very diligent about holding on to their electronic waste until the county has its annual electronic waste recycling event.

Last year, nearly 530 residents and 230 businesses came to the event and brought assorted electronic items for recycling. A total of 16 shipping containers full of materials were collected over a two-day period resulting in approximately 112 tons of electronics being diverted from the Kekaha Landfill.

For many of the *Road to Recycling* participants, the tour offered them their first experience of the landfill, where an average of 200 to 250 tons of waste is brought every day.

A technical advisor whose job is to ensure that the landfill operation is in compliance with all EPA regulations told the tour group that the Kekaha Landfill is one of the cleanest landfills of the 100 in Hawai'i and the western region that his companies oversees.

A composite liner system with a 50-year warranty is used at the landfill and the trash is covered with dirt on a daily basis.

"We are also required to email photos of the landfill twice a day, noon and at 5 p.m., to the state Department of Health and the county to assure them that we are following regulations," said John Ruiz with Waste Management of Hawai'i, the county's contractor for landfill operations.

Throughout the tour, participants were able to win recycled prizes for correctly answering questions regarding recycling and solid waste management, e.g. which county diversion program is the most cost-effective; the answer - the home composting program.

Lunch was taken in a private dining room at the Waimea Plantation Cottages, where participants were able to enjoy a relaxing meal before the long journey back to Līhu'e.

Upon returning to the Kaua'i Resource Center, a brief presentation was given on the services offered at KRC, including a HI-5 recycling loaner bin program for special events and a recently added household battery recycling program.

To learn more about the *Road to Recycling* bus tours, go to www.kauai.gov/roadtorecycling.

So far, two more tours targeting adult residents are scheduled this year:

- Recycling in Action, Thursday, March 22, 8:15 a.m. to 3 p.m. – tour will include stops at Island School, Gaylord's, Kaua'i Community Federal Credit Union, and the Grand Hyatt Kaua'i Resort and Spa.
- Introduction to Recycling, Thursday, May 17, 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. – tour will include a presentation on the county's solid waste management activities and stops at the Kaua'i Resource Center, Garden Isle Disposal, and the Kekaha Landfill.

To sign up for the free tours, please call 241-5120 or send an email to: iyoshida@kauai.gov.

Pre-registration is required and will be handled on a first-come, first-served basis as space is limited.

Guests can bring their own lunch or pay \$15 for lunch at the designated tour stops.

To arrange for special assistance or an auxiliary aid in order to participate in a tour, please contact Yoshida at least one week prior to the tour.

Funding for the Road to Recycling tour bus series is provided by a state grant from the Deposit Beverage Container (HI5) program.

###

